

Ivy Grove Surgery

Minor Illness Leaflet #7 – Conjunctivitis

Dear

We have provided this leaflet following your recent consultation on . The NHS aims to empower all patients to self-care and we hope that this leaflet will help you to manage your condition in the future.

Name of condition

Conjunctivitis

What it is

Conjunctivitis is caused by bacteria, viruses or other organisms, and from allergy or inflammation

Symptoms to expect

- One or both eyes become red or pink, they may be sticky or watery and may have surface irritation or discharge
- Eyelids may become swollen, and are often stuck together with gluey material (discharge) after a sleep
- May get some blurring of vision due to discharge at the front of the eye, however, this clears with blinking

Self-care

- Most infections will clear up on their own
- Clean any discharge/crusting away with a cotton pad and water
- Antibiotic drops and/or lubricating drops may be prescribed for a short course and are available to buy over the counter (in patients without complications over 2 years of age)
- Without treatment, most cases of infective conjunctivitis clear on their own within 1-2 weeks
- Viral conjunctivitis are very contagious so washing hands frequently and not sharing towels/pillows is important to reduce the risk of spread
- Artificial tears (available to buy over the counter) with regular lid cleaning and cold compresses
- Contact lenses should not be worn during any type of conjunctivitis until symptoms have completely gone, and for 24 hours after the last dose of any eye drops or ointment is used

Antibiotic drops can be helpful in more severe cases bacterial conjunctivitis and are often prescribed for a one or two-week course.

When to seek further help

- You develop marked eye pain
- Light starts to hurt your eyes (photophobia)
- Spots or blisters develop on the skin next to the eye
- Your vision becomes affected (does not improve on blinking)
- Your new born baby develops conjunctivitis

Does a child with conjunctivitis need to stay off school?

Guidance from Public Health England (PHE) (the Health Protection Agency) states that it is not necessary to exclude a child from school or from childcare if they have infective conjunctivitis, unless there is an outbreak of several cases. If an outbreak occurs, the school or childcare centre should seek advice from the PHE or other health professional

For further advice you can contact your local pharmacist, optician or minor injuries unit or call out of hours NHS advice line on 111.